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ABSTRACT

A teaching strategy is outlined which has been found useful in an adult, multi-level second language class. Basic to the model is effective planning in which attention to group structure, class organization, and the development of learning activities and materials are central considerations. Each of these considerations is discussed and presented graphically with various kinds of charts. The multi-level teaching model, "The Duvals," is presented. Each unit in the materials consists of a theme which is presented to the entire class, with related exercises on three levels. The overall plan for each unit is given in chart form, as well as sample pages. (Author/AMH)

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THE DUVALS: A MODEL FOR MULTI-LEVEL TEACHING

Jennifer House and Sheila Rooney

For an English as a Second Language teacher, the ideal classroom situation is one in which the students are relatively homogeneous in language ability. However, the multi-level class, that is a class in which a particularly wide range of language competencies exist at one time, is often the reality of teaching English in the community or in a small institution. Dealing with this reality can be a frustrating experience for student and instructor alike. It is our purpose in this paper to outline a teaching strategy which we have found to be useful in the multi-level class.

The basis for this strategy is effective planning. Planning for a multi-level class must include:

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-assessing the instructor's capabilities, the learning situation and the facilities as well as the students' skills and needs

-determining group structure, the instructor's role and class organization as well as the choice and development of learning activities and materials

-evaluating the class plan

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The process of planning is illustrated in Chart I

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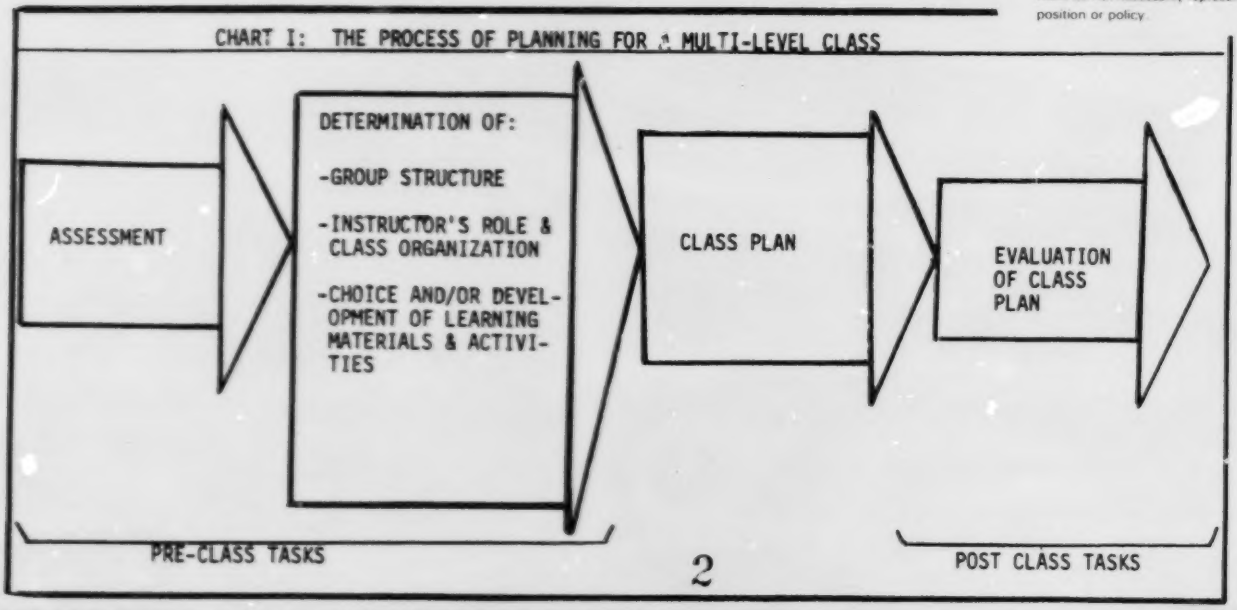
CHART I: THE PROCESS OF PLANNING FOR A MULTI-LEVEL CLASS



Central to the process of planning for a multi-level class are group structure, class organization and the development of learning activities and materials. These will be discussed in detail in this paper.

GROUP STRUCTURE

The instructor's goal in teaching a multi-level class is to provide the best possible language learning experience for each of the students. A first step in implementing this goal is to plan ways of grouping the class taking into account group size, group composition, and the effects of different types of grouping on the students.

The following chart analyses group size and its positive effects.

CHART II: GROUP SIZE AND ITS POSITIVE EFFECTS

GROUP SIZE	POSITIVE EFFECTS
Whole Class Group	Maintains class unity
Two Class Groups	Promotes more student participation
Small Groups (3-5)	
Pairs	Promotes maximum participation
Independent Study	Meets individual needs

In addition to group size, consideration must be given to the composition of groups. Group composition is based on the characteristics of individual students, and most often on the student's level of English language skills. In a multi-level class, a student may be grouped with students of either the same or different levels of English language skills. By being aware of the possible effects of these choices, the instructor can maximize the positive effects for the students and provide the best possible language

learning experience.

Although the effects of grouping by English language level must always be taken into account, it may be useful, in response to specific student needs, to group by variables such as first language, sex, educational background or the student's goal in learning English. For example, attaining citizenship may be a goal for a number of students and the instructor may choose to group accordingly. Thus the primary focus would be on the student's goal in learning English. The positive effects of grouping by this particular variable would be the high motivation resulting from the relevant lesson content. This type of grouping would most likely result in a group with different language levels. Thus, some peer teaching would be useful, the learning activities would be limited and the time span necessarily brief. For a more detailed look at variables which may be used for grouping students in multi-level classes and their possible effects refer to Chart III.

CHART III: VARIABLES FOR GROUPING IN A MULTI-LEVEL CLASS AND THEIR POSSIBLE EFFECTS

VARIABLES FOR GROUP		POSSIBLE EFFECTS
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEVEL Speaking/Listening	same	(-) students work and practise at a similar pace (+) increases security
	different	(+) provides a challenge for lower student and peer teaching opportunity for advanced (-) students can become frustrated if overused
Reading/Writing	same	(+) increases security (+) allows students to work at their own pace
	different	(-) activities are limited (+) peer teaching possible
FIRST LANGUAGE	same	(+) can translate if necessary (-) may overuse own language & not practice English
	different	(+) students use English (-) translation & explanations difficult
SEX	same	(+) can deal with sex related issues, e.g. women's health care
	different	(-) possible cultural barriers to mixed sexes
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND (in native country)	same	(+) wide variety of possible lesson content
	different	(-) appropriate lesson content must be carefully chosen
GOAL IN LEARNING ENGLISH	same	(+) lesson content can be relevant & students motivated
	different	(-) students may vary in their degree of motivation

CLASS ORGANIZATION

Another consideration in providing an effective language learning experience for a multi-level class is that of the role of the instructor and the organization of the class. The class plan that follows integrates the instructor's choices for group size and group composition with her own role in an overall management plan.

CHART IV: A CLASS PLAN FOR A MULTI-LEVEL CLASS

GROUP SIZE	INSTRUCTOR'S ROLE AND CLASS ORGANIZATION			TIME FRAME
WHOLE CLASS	WARM UP AND REVISION ACTIVITIES (I)			15 MINS.
WHOLE CLASS	MAIN LEARNING ACTIVITY (I)			25 MINS.
PAIRS	QUESTION AND ANSWER FORMATION			10 MINS.
SMALL GROUPS	LEARNING ACTIVITY [LL1] (I)	LEARNING ACTIVITY [LL2]	LEARNING ACTIVITY [LL3]	30 MINS.
TWO CLASS GROUPS	LEARNING ACTIVITY [LL1]	LEARNING ACTIVITY [LL23] (I)		30 MINS.
TWO CLASS GROUPS	LEARNING ACTIVITY [G] ← (I) →	LEARNING ACTIVITY [G]		30 MINS.
WHOLE CLASS	CLOSING ACTIVITY (I)			10 MINS.

KEY FOR CHART IV:

[LL] LANGUAGE LEVEL:

[LL1] CLASS GROUP WITH LOWEST COMPOSITE OF LANGUAGE SKILLS: Reading/Writing
Speaking/Listening

[LL2] CLASS GROUP WITH MIDDLE RANGE OF LANGUAGE SKILLS

[LL3] CLASS GROUP WITH HIGHEST RANGE OF LANGUAGE SKILLS

(I) INSTRUCTOR

[G] GOAL FOR LEARNING ENGLISH IS SIMILAR

TIME FRAME - 2½ HOUR CLASS

The class plan in Chart IV utilizes various kinds of grouping to maximize the positive effects of each learning activity for the student. In order to promote class unity, the class is together for the main learning activity and the closing activity. The composition and size of the learning groups will vary for the remainder of the class plan.

It is also evident in Chart IV that two or more learning activities can be going on simultaneously in a multi-level class. This can be achieved by the instructor allocating her time prior to the class and planning whether she will be working exclusively with one group, moving from group to group or working with an individual student. This entails planning learning activities ranging from those in which the instructor is an integral part to those which require a minimum amount of instructor supervision.

CHOICE AND/OR DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING MATERIALS

Along with group structure and class organization, appropriate learning materials are an integral part of the process of planning for the multi-level class. As illustrated in Chart IV, it is possible to have several learning activities occurring simultaneously in a multi-level class. Learning materials must not only relate to the main learning activity but also provide for self-directed activities for groups with different English language levels. There are two options for choosing learning materials for the multi-level class. The instructor may use learning materials already on the market or develop learning materials specifically for a multi-level class. Since it is difficult to find learning materials on the

market which will suit a multi-level class, the latter choice is preferable if at all feasible. The last part of this paper describes a set of materials developed specifically for multi-level classes and designed with a format based on the principles of lesson planning and class organization discussed in this paper.

The Duvals

A. Background

The Duvals was designed for adults enrolled in two community-based programs at Vancouver Community College - the Homefront Learning Program and the Neighbourhood English Classes. The materials were developed in response to the kind of student population, the facilities and the learning situation found in these community programs.

Community - based programs at Vancouver Community College attract students with a wide range of language needs and interests. Educational backgrounds and lengths of time in Canada vary considerably from student to student. To accommodate the range of students in the classes, The Duvals was developed to provide a framework which could be supplemented to meet the specific needs of a particular class.

In the community classes, student enrollment changes frequently, depending on immigration patterns, employment opportunities and shifting family responsibilities. As a result there is a policy of continuous intake which necessitated the development of eight self-contained units with only a thematic overlap.

The programs are located in the immediate neighbourhood of the student and class facilities vary considerably. Classes may be located

in community centres, local churches or students' homes, the only constant being the temporary nature of the classroom and its proximity to the student. The instructor is therefore responsible for providing and transporting all learning materials and audio-visual equipment. It was thus necessary for The Duvals to be portable.

And finally, reflecting the varying levels of English language competency that may exist in a single community, most of the classes are multi-level. For this reason, The Duvals was developed in units with a single theme but at three levels of English language competency.

In short, there were four overriding considerations in the development of The Duvals. The learning materials had to:

- be flexible and yet provide a basic framework from which the instructor could develop, supplement and expand the learning materials to meet the range of language needs and interests present in the class.
- allow for continuous intake of students
- be portable and not overly dependent on audio-visual equipment
- be designed to accommodate the multi-level class

B. Content

The acquisition of language skills which can be transferred immediately from classroom to everyday life is of prime importance in the community-based programs. The Duvals focuses on survival English and an orientation to the Canadian way of life through the theme of a French Canadian family moving to Vancouver from Montreal. This allows for students to identify with an English language learner, but one who is quite familiar with Canadian customs and culture. At the same time, it was hoped the material would have a universal appeal because it avoids identification with any of the major immigrant groups.

C. Format

The Duvals includes a Teacher's Book and three Student Books for each unit and level (8 units with 3 levels each). Each unit was orginally designed for two class periods of two hours each. However, during the field-testing of the units, it was found that the time frame varied considerably in different classes, ranging from 4 to 12 hours depending on the instructors's adaptations and supplements to the basic material.

The Teacher's Book

The Teacher's Book consists of:

- an introduction
- suggestions for classroom use
- an outline of the units specifying unit topics, exchanges and linguistic structures
- large ($8\frac{1}{2}$" x 11") visuals for each unit depicting the featured story or dialogue

Students Books

The student books are developed in three language levels:

Level 1 - learning materials for basic beginners with little or no reading and writing skills

Level 2 - more advanced beginners with limited reading and writing skills

Level 3 - more advanced beginners and lower intermediate students with more reading and writing skills

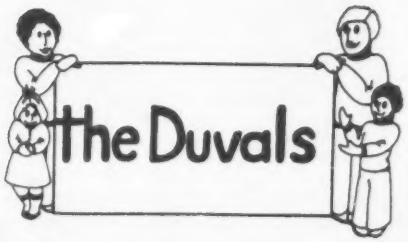
There are student books for each of the eight units or learning modules. Each module revolves around a single topic and includes a story/dialogue for presentation to the class as a whole as well as support le...ning materials for each of the three levels of language competency. These levels are colour-coded to facilitate distribution to instructors and students.

All eight units follow the plan illustrated in Chart V.

CHART V: THE DUVALS: THE OVERALL PLAN FOR EACH UNIT	
LEARNING MATERIALS*	DESCRIPTION
STORY/DIALOGUE	- The story/dialogue is the same for all levels. - The class is together for this presentation. - Content focuses on survival English and an orientation to the Canadian way of life. - Large visuals depicting the story/dialogue are provided for instructors.
EXERCISES	- Exercises develop and reinforce themes, linguistic forms and skills presented in the story/dialogue. - Exercises are generally different for each level but sometimes overlap to facilitate grouping between levels.
LISTENING COMPREHENSION EXERCISES	- Listening Comprehension exercises are included in each unit for levels 2 and 3 only. - Exercises can be put on tape, or read by instructor or an advanced student.
WORD/NUMBER RECOGNITION EXERCISES	- The word/number recognition exercises are the same for all levels. - Exercises were developed to promote a feeling of class cohesiveness and are designed to be presented to whole class as a closing activity.
SUPPLEMENTS	- Supplements were developed to provide additional information, exercises and extension activities in the same topic area as presented in the story/dialogue.

* Examples are given on pages 11, 12 and 13

FAMILY NAME _____
FIRST NAME _____
HEIGHT ___ ___
WEIGHT _____ LBS.



NEIGHBOURHOOD
ENGLISH
DEPARTMENT

KING EDWARD CAMPUS
VANCOUVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MARIA'S NEW RECIPE
"CHICKEN SURPRISE"

Unit 5
Levels 1, 2, 3

It is easy to make. That is the surprise!

Ingredients:

1 - 2½ lb. chicken
flour
1 egg
¼ cup milk
bread crumbs
¼ cup butter
¼ cup water

Cut the chicken into small pieces.
Sprinkle it with flour.
Combine and beat 1 egg and ¼ cup milk.
Dip the chicken in the egg mixture and then in the bread crumbs.
Melt the butter. When it is very hot, brown the chicken in it.
Pour the water into the frying pan.
Cover the pan and put it into an oven at 300°.
Cook the chicken until it is tender (about 1 hour).

STORY

Unit 5
Levels 1, 2, 3

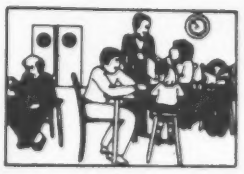
1. Paul and Maria made dinner about 5:30 last Friday. Paul cooked the rice and broccoli. Maria tried a new recipe called "Chicken Surprise".

2. About six o'clock, the phone rang in the livingroom. Carol answered the phone. It was Grandmother Cortez calling from Spain. Everyone spoke to Grandmother Cortez. It took a long time. Maria forgot about the chicken in the oven.

Unit 5
Levels 1, 2, 3

3. About seven o'clock Paul smelled smoke and everyone ran to the kitchen.

4. Paul took the chicken out of the oven. Robert said, "Yuk, Pam burnt the chicken." Paul smiled and said, "Chicken Surprise is a good name for that recipe."

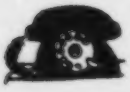


5. The Duvals went to a restaurant for dinner. Chicken was on the menu but everyone ordered spaghetti.

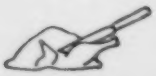
EXERCISES

Unit 5
Level 1

chicken	clock	Paul
restaurant	kitchen	phone
Maria		pot



1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____



4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

7. _____ 8. _____

Unit 5
Level 2

1.

Every day	Yesterday
cook	cooked
try	tried
call	called

Paul and Maria made dinner about 5:30 last Friday. Paul _____ the rice and broccoli. Maria _____ a new recipe _____ "Chicken Surprise".

2.

Every day	Yesterday
ring	rang
is	was
speak	
take	
forget	
run	

About six o'clock, the phone [redacted] in the livingroom. Carol answered the phone. It _____ grandmother Cortez calling from Spain. Everyone _____ to grandmother Cortez. It _____ a long time and Maria _____ about the chicken in the oven.

About seven o'clock, Paul smelled smoke and everyone _____ to the kitchen.

Unit 5
Level 3

Maria is ordering dinner. Complete the conversation between Maria and the waiter. Use the menu on the following page.

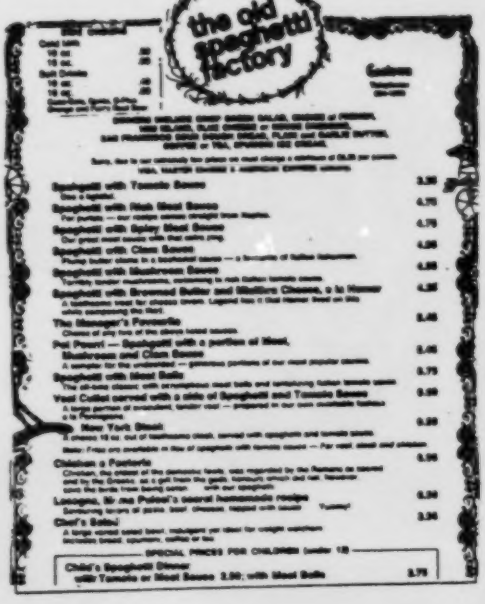
Complete the following dialogue

Waiter: Good evening, may I take your order?
Maria: Yes, I'd like to order _____
_____
_____
_____
Waiter: What kind of dressing would you like on your salads?
Maria: We'll have _____dressing on our salads.
Waiter: Would _____like something to drink with your meals?
Maria: Yes. Paul and I will have_____and the children will have _____.
Waiter: And will you have spumoni ice cream for dessert?
Maria: _____
Waiter: Thank you and enjoy your meal.

WRITING:

1. How much was the Bonelli' bill for dinner? $_____
2. How much was the tip? $_____

Unit 5
Level 3



LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Unit 5
Levels 2, 3

Write the numbers you hear:

Cardinal numbers:	Ordinal numbers:
eg. Carol is 9 years old.	eg. This is Carol's 9th birthday
1. About _____ o'clock, the phone rang in the living-room	1. It was the _____ time, grandmother Cortez phoned Vancouver.
2. There are ___ people in the Duval family.	2. Carol was the ___ child in the Duval family.
3. About __ o'clock, Paul smelled smoke in the kitchen.	3. Friday is the ___ day in the week.
4. About __ o'clock, the Duvals went to a restaurant for dinner.	4. It was the ___ time, Maria cooked "Chicken Surprise".
5. There were __ pieces of chicken in the box.	5. The _____ piece of chicken was a leg.
6. The temperature was __ °C in Spain.	6. The date was Friday, September _____.
7. Grandmother Cortez is __ years old.	7. Grandmother Cortez is in her _____ year.
8. The Duvals spoke to grandmother Cortez for __ minutes.	8. The restaurant was at East _____ avenue.

WORD RECOGNITION

Unit 5
Levels 1,2,3

1. recipe receipt restaurant	2. works worked working	3. seven seventy seventeen
4. chicken egg chick	5. ring rang spring	6. grandmother mother grandfather
7. everyone someone somebody	8. six sick stick	9. spaghetti surprise supper
10. smell smoke smile	11. night right light	12. run ran rang

SUPPLEMENT

USING THE TELEPHONE

Unit 5
Levels 1, 2, 3

IN AN EMERGENCY - TURN TO THE FIRST PAGE IN THE PHONE BOOK AND DIAL THE NUMBER YOU NEED:

EMERGENCY CALLS

	FIRE OR INHALATOR	POLICE	AMBULANCE
VANCOUVER	911	911	911
BURNABY	291-1234	299-8822	872-5151
UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT LANDS	228-8567	224-1322	228-8567

DOCTOR after hours (including weekends) 683-3474
POISON CONTROL CENTRE
VANCOUVER 874-9888 or 682-2344
BURNABY 436-9888
CRISIS CENTRE for personal or emotional crises 733-4111
HELPLINE FOR CHILDREN
Telephoning for child abuse & neglect
Dial "O" and for Enquiry 1234

SOCIAL SERVICES (family & child services) 660-3111
RAPE RELIEF for victims of rape assault 732-1913
FREEWAY PATROL 738-8348

MOSAIC 254-9626
Multicultural Help Org. Vancouver

AMBULANCE

POLICE

FIRE

Unit 5
Levels 1, 2, 3

telephone number	Service	"Can I help you?"
682 - 2344	Vancouver Poison Control Centre	Yes my daughter swallowed Pures bleach.
733-4111	Crisis Centre	I'm really worried. I need someone to talk to.
		I need a translator to help me with my income tax forms.
		Our bedroom is on fire.
		"My car has broken down on the Burrard Bridge"
		"I need a doctor. My son has a fever and a red rash"
		My daughter is missing. She didn't come home from school today.
		I need an ambulance. There's been an accident.

Unit 5
Levels 1, 2, 3

Maria saw an accident on Main Street. A car hit a woman. The car didn't stop. Maria ran to her telephone and phoned 911.

Operator - Police, Ambulance or Fire
Maria - Hello, this is Maria Duval.
Operator - Can I help you?
Maria - Yes, I want to report an accident.
I need a translator.
I speak Spanish.
Operator - One moment please. I'll connect you with our Spanish translator.
Maria - Thank you.

You are walking to the store. An old man falls and hits his head. His head is bleeding and he's not moving. You phone 911.

Operator - Police, Ambulance or Fire.
_____ - Hello, this is _____ _____
Operator - Can I help you?
_____ - Yes. _____
I need _____
I speak _____
Operator - One moment please. I'll connect you with our _____ translator.
_____ - _____ ____

Table of Contents For The Duvals

Level	Unit	Title	Exchanges	Structures
1 2 3	1	"Newcomers in Vancouver"	asking & answering personal information questions; introducing; spelling names	questions: where, who, when, how
1 2 3	2	"Maria Goes to English Class"	Asking & answering personal questions; spelling & giving address; describing feelings Supplement: talking about days of the week & months of the year	questions possessives
1 2 3	3	"Maria Meets Her Neighbour"	interacting socially; giving telephone numbers Supplement: talking about the weather and calendars	present continuous prepositions: in, on, at; tag questions; personal information questions (pres. perf. & past)
1 2	4	"Morning at the Duvals"	describing daily activities; talking about meals; telling time & asking for time; using expanded time expressions Supplement: identifying furniture and rooms in a house; getting information on buses	present tense; contrast present & present continuous; time expressions
1 2 3	5	"Chicken Surprise"	talking about cooking utensils, recipes & activities; ordering in a restaurant Supplement: using the telephone; identifying cooking & eating utensils	regular and irregular past; contrast past and present
1 2 3	6	"Getting Ready for Grandmother"	describing household activities; identifying family members Supplement: describing family members; identifying furniture	"going to"; questions: where, what
1 2 3	7	"Grandmother Arrives"	describing occupations; talking about travelling Supplement: talking about cars; asking for and giving directions	past tense; pronouns
1 2 3	8	"Guests for Dinner"	interacting socially; talking about polite customs; accepting & refusing invitations Supplement: describing table settings; getting information on English classes	"would"

(A COPY OF THE ABSTRACT IS ON THE ORIENTATION)

III. A. House, Jennifer and
Rooney, Sheila

B. The Duvals: A Model for Multi-level Teaching

C.

This paper will develop an overall teaching strategy for meeting the needs of a multi-level class. We will examine: 1) the size and composition of groups 2) the instructor's role and class organization, and 3) the development of learning materials and teaching techniques.

A sample of learning materials developed specifically for adult, multi-level classes will be presented. Each unit consists of a theme which is presented to the entire class, with related exercises on three levels, thus allowing for class cohesiveness as well as diverse ability levels.

A booklet containing the flow charts, samples of learning materials developed and information sheets used during the presentation will be made available to participants.

D.

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The Duvals: Learning Materials for Multi-level Classes
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